

REMARKS

I. Status of the Application

Claims 3-11, 15-16 and 18-19 are all the claims pending in the Application. Claim 6 has been rejected.

The present response addresses each point of objection and rejection raised by the Examiner. Favorable reconsideration is respectfully requested.

II. Allowable Subject Matter

Applicant thanks the Examiner for indicating that claims 3-5 and 7-11, 15-16 and 18-19 are allowed.

III. Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 103

The Examiner has rejected claim 6 under 35 U.S.C. § 103, as allegedly being unpatentable over GB 521,268 to Timbro (hereinafter "Timbro") in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,897,771 to Lodhie et al. (hereinafter "Lodhie"). Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection for *at least* the reasons set forth below.

Applicant respectfully submits that claim 6 patentably distinguishes over the cited references. However, since the priority date of the present application (November 6, 2002) is earlier than the U.S. filing date of the cited Lodhie reference (July 19, 2003), Lodhie is not even prior art, and the § 103 rejection is improper. Applicant submits herewith a verified translation of the priority document (Japanese Application No. 2002-322653) in order to perfect the claim for priority. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests that the rejection of claim 6 under 35 U.S.C. § 103 be reconsidered and withdrawn.

RESPONSE UNDER 37 C.F.R. § 1.111
Application No.: 10/698,939

Attorney Docket No.: Q77928

IV. Conclusion

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,

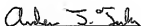
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